Private Investment in Railways

2863. PROF.ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry are considering plans not only to operate passenger trains but also construct and own locomotives, coaches and tracks by private players in the country;

(b) if so, whether Railways is studying investment models for train operations in other countries and has decided to adopt operations system of Sweden; and

(c) if so, by when final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRi R. VELU): (a) There is no plan to permit transportation/running of passenger trains by the private sector. However, some commercial activities concerning passenger trains can be permitted to be undertaken by the private sector. There is no plan to ailow ownership of locomotives and tracks as of now, by the private sector for passenger train operations on the Indian Railway network. However, tourist passenger coaches can be jointly owned. It has been decided to explore the feasibility of setting up manufacturing units for locomotives and coaches in a Joint Venture involving private sector.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Unmanned level crossing in Madhya Pradesh

†2864. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of unmanned level crossings in the country and its number in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the total number of accident taken place at the said level crossings in the State of Madhya Pradesh and the total number of persons killed in these accidents;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether these unmanned level crossings would be equipped with barriers in future;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) the scheme formulated for prevention of such accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As on 01.04.2006 there were 18297 unmanned level crossings (excluding canal crossings and 'D' class cattle crossings) in the country out of which 977 were in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) During the year 2006-07 in the State of Madhya Pradesh, no accident took place at unmanned level crossings and hence there were no casualties involved.

(c) to (e) As per extant rules, in case an unmanned level crossing provided initially and maintained at the cost of the Railways needs manning/ upgrading/posting of additional gatekeeper due to increase in road traffic, the cost both initial as well as recurring and maintenance has to be borne by the State Government/Road Authorities concerned. However, keeping in view the grave consequences of accidents at unmanned level crossings, Railways have decided to man vulnerable level crossings based on the traffic volume and visibility conditions at the unmanned level crossings for which Railways have laid down certain criteria.

447 unmanned level crossings are provisionally targeted for manning during 2007-08.

Construction of overbridges/underbridges in Karnataka

2865. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals for construction of overbridges/underbridges received from the State of Karnataka pending with the Railways as on 31 st March, 2007;

(b) by when a final decision on such proposals is to be taken; and

(c) the funds earmarked by the Railways during 2007-08 for the execution of such projects in Karnataka?